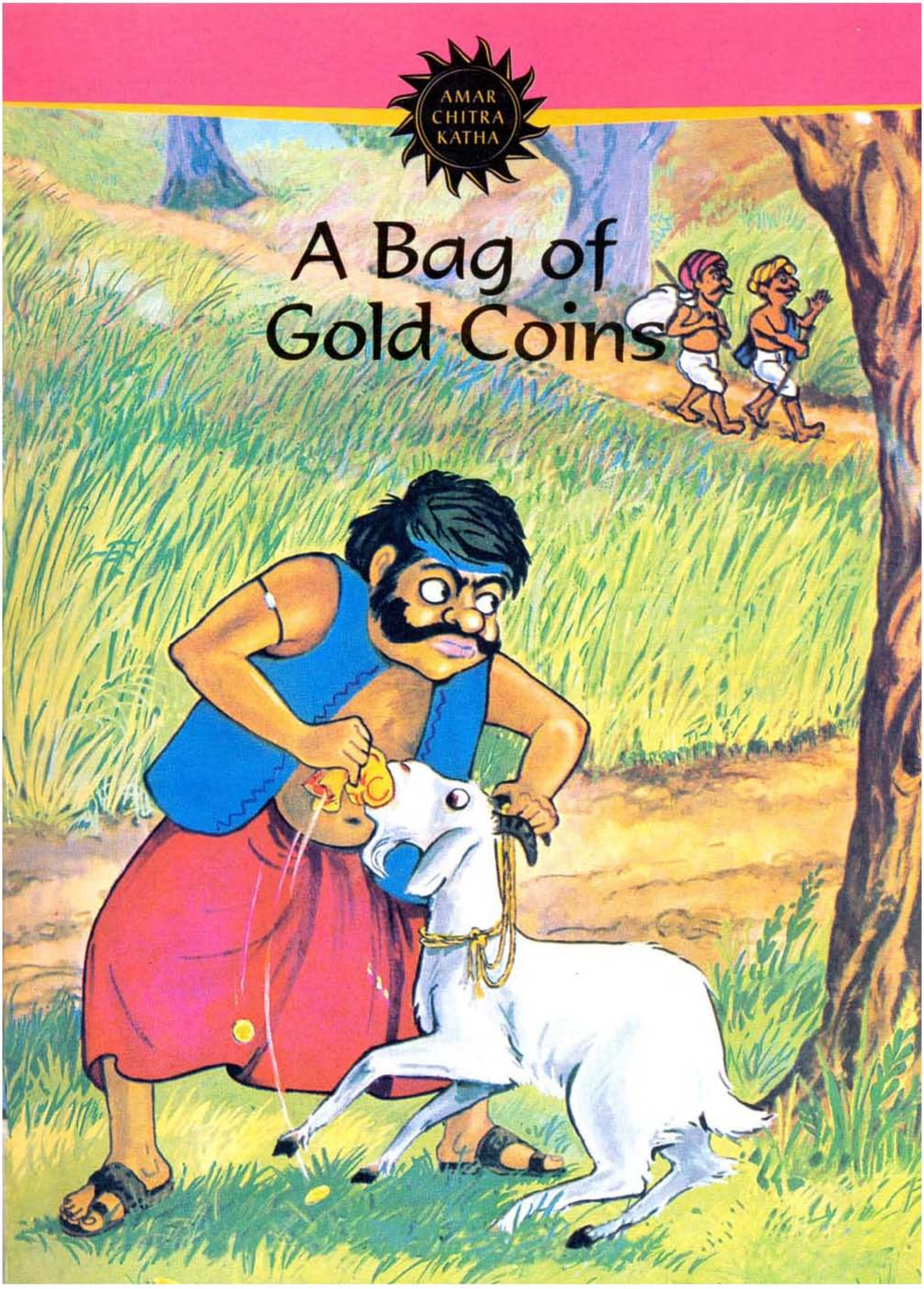

AMAR
CHITRA
KATHA
A Bag of
Gold Coins

AMAR CHITRA KATHA

Illustrated Classics From India

A Bag of Gold Coins

The two stories in this Amar Chitra Katha are adapted from Anwar-i-Suhaili, a Persian version of the Panchatantra, written by Hussain Ali Waiz. Born in the kingdom of Khurasan at the time of Sultan Hussain Mirza (1469–1506 AD), Waiz took the liberty of changing the names of characters to give them local appeal.

The stories from Anwar-i-Suhaili, with its singularly beautiful writing, were illustrated many times by eminent painters in the courts of Akbar and Jahangir. It is one of the most beautiful expositions of the early phase of Mughal painting. Only three copies of the book have been found. Two of them are in India and the third in a museum in London.

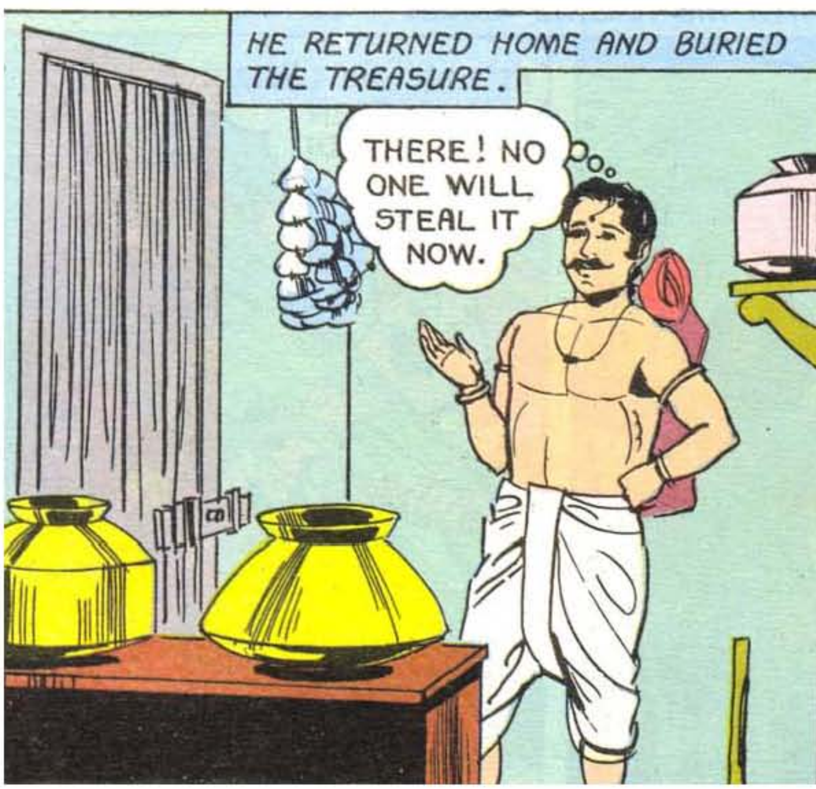
In Waiz's version of the first story, the bag of gold coins is stuffed into the mouth of a cow, which is later killed. To avoid hurting the sentiments of a vast section of Indians, we have shown a goat in our version.

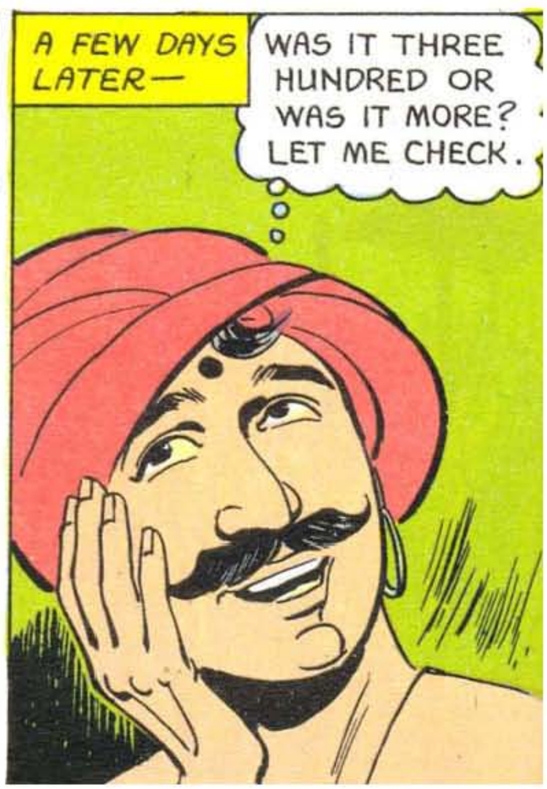
Script: Shanti Devi Motichandra   Illustrations: V. B. Halbe   Cover: V. B. Halbe

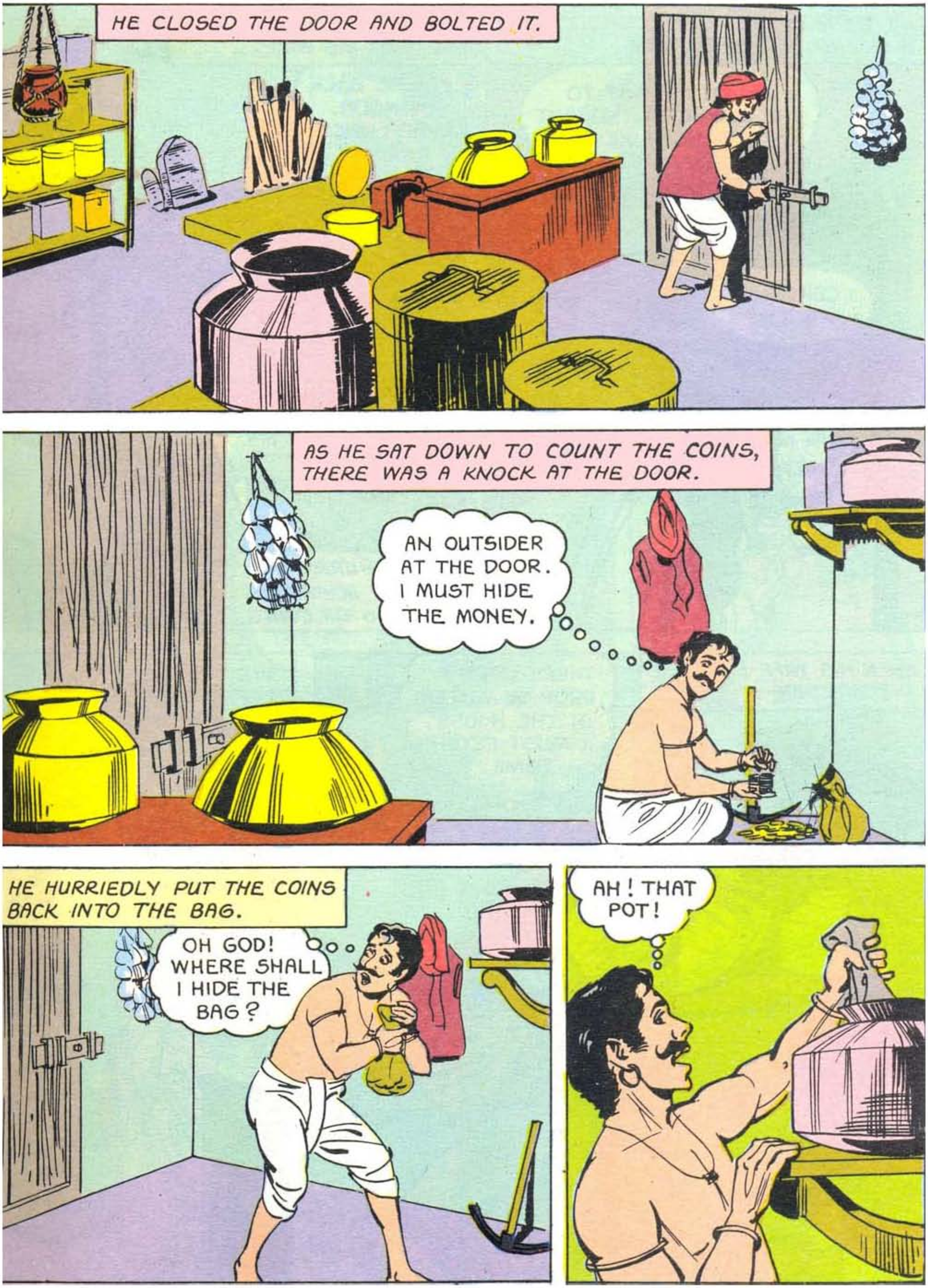

A BAG OF GOLD COINS
LONG, LONG AGO THERE LIVED A FARMER WHO ALWAYS WORKED HARD.


WITH HIS TOIL, HE RAISED A BUMPER CROP.
AT LAST MY LABOUR HAS BEEN REWARDED!


HE SOLD HIS CROP AT A GOOD PROFIT IN THE CITY MARKET.
THREE HUNDRED GOLD COINS! I MUST NOT LET ANYBODY KNOW ABOUT MY GOOD FORTUNE.


HE RETURNED HOME AND BURIED THE TREASURE.
THERE! NO ONE WILL STEAL IT NOW.


A FEW DAYS LATER—
WAS IT THREE HUNDRED OR WAS IT MORE? LET ME CHECK.

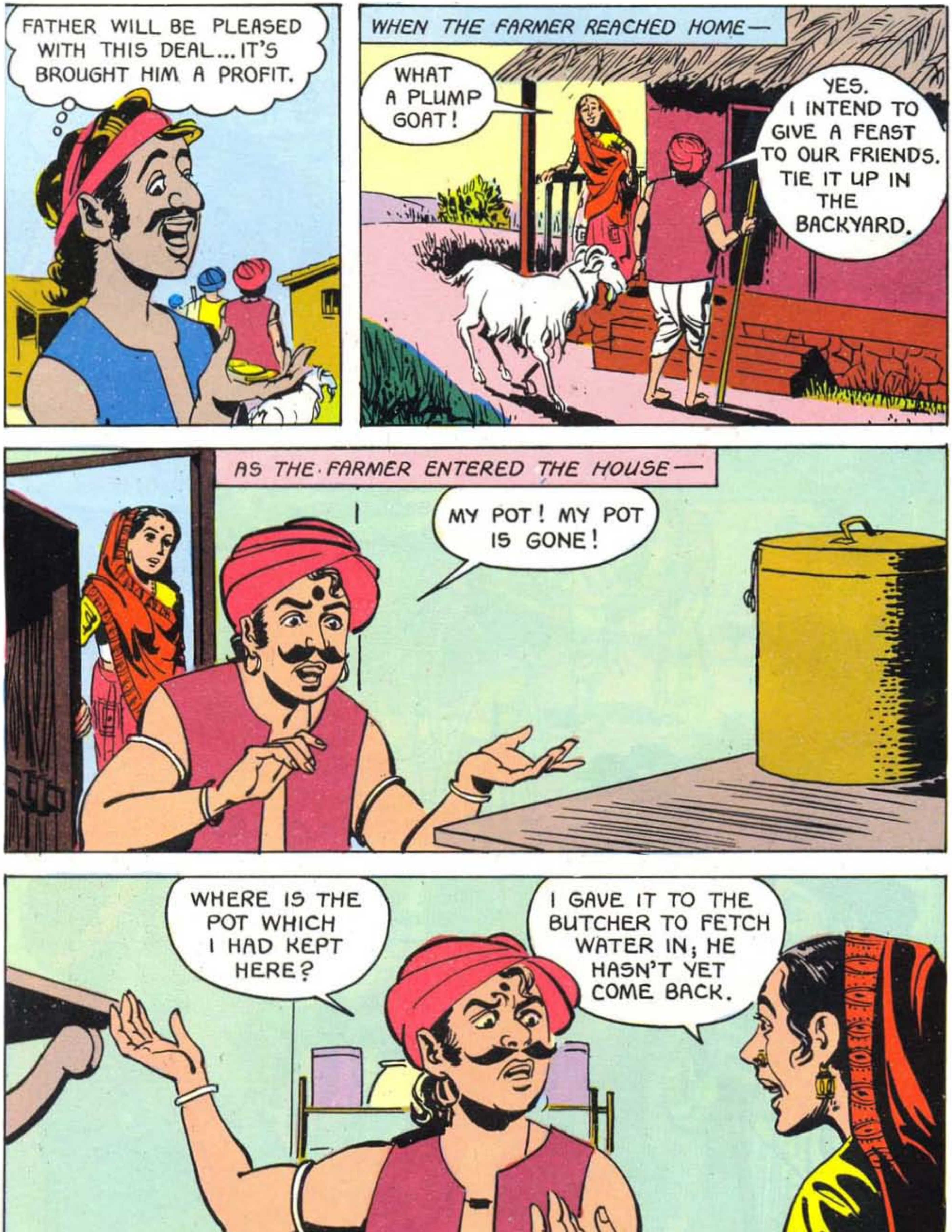

HE CLOSED THE DOOR AND BOLTED IT.
AS HE SAT DOWN TO COUNT THE COINS, THERE WAS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.
AN OUTSIDER AT THE DOOR. I MUST HIDE THE MONEY.
HE HURRIEDLY PUT THE COINS BACK INTO THE BAG.
OH GOD! WHERE SHALL I HIDE THE BAG?
AH! THAT POT!


HE THEN OPENED THE DOOR. IT WAS A FRIEND OF HIS OUTSIDE.
I AM ON MY WAY TO THE MARKET. I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO JOIN ME.
I CERTAINLY WOULD!
AS HE WAS SETTING OUT, HE SAW HIS WIFE.
I'LL BE BACK BY NOON. KEEP LUNCH READY.
IN HIS HURRY HE FORGOT ALL ABOUT THE BAG OF COINS.
WHEN HIS WIFE ENTERED THE KITCHEN—
THERE ISN'T A DROP OF WATER IN THE HOUSE. I MUST FETCH SOME.
SHE TOOK A POT...

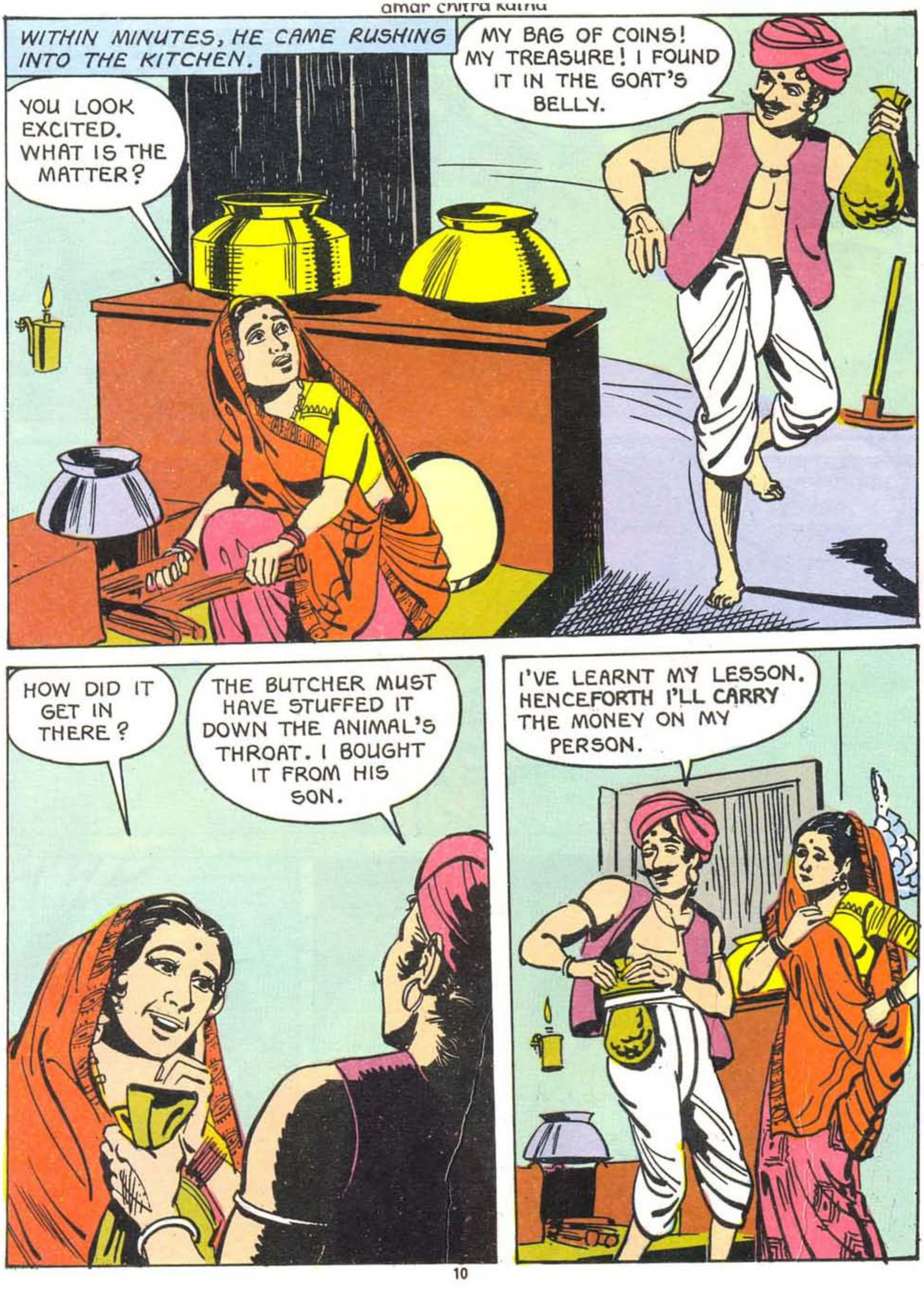

..AND WAS ABOUT TO SET OUT FOR THE RIVER, WHEN A THOUGHT SUDDENLY STRUCK HER.
MY HUSBAND WILL BE UPSET IF HE FINDS NO ONE AT HOME WHEN HE RETURNS.
AH! HERE COMES THE BUTCHER! HE IS ALWAYS HELPFUL.
WILL YOU FETCH ME SOME WATER?
BY ALL MEANS. GIVE ME THE POT.
AS THE BUTCHER WALKED TOWARDS THE RIVER HE HEARD A CLINKING FROM THE POT.
JINGLE
WHAT'S THIS INSIDE THE POT? A BAG!
NOW WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE? COINS?

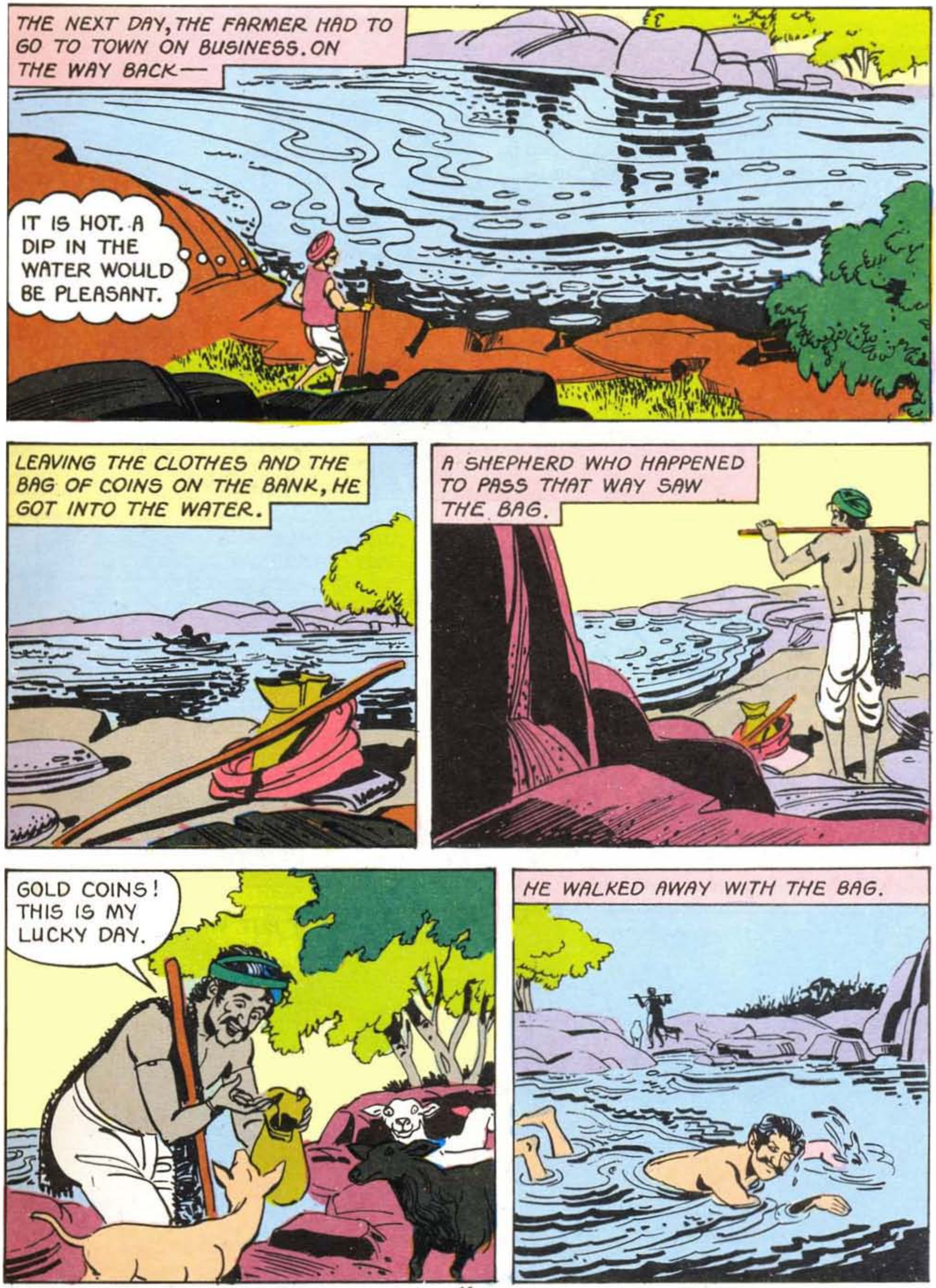

HE PUT DOWN THE POT AND EXAMINED THE BAG.
GOLD COINS, ALL OF THEM! THIS IS MY LUCKY DAY!
HE FORGOT ALL ABOUT THE WATER AND WALKED TOWARDS THE CITY.
I WILL GIVE A FEAST TO MY FRIENDS.
HE BOUGHT A FAT GOAT AT THE MARKET. ON HIS WAY BACK—
WHAT A FOOL AM I, TO CARRY THE BAG OPENLY!
I MUST HIDE IT IMMEDIATELY.
WHAT BETTER PLACE THAN THE GOAT'S INSIDE!

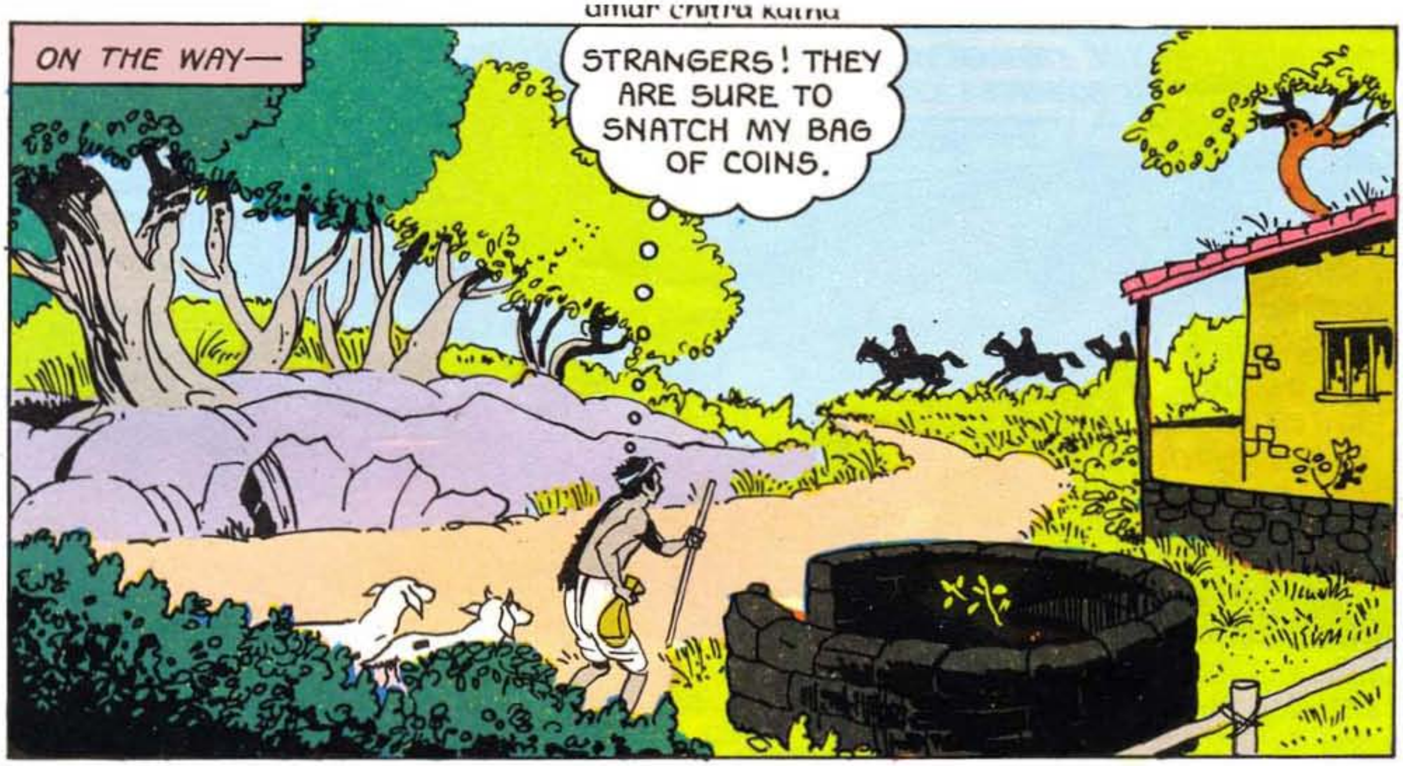

AS HE WENT FARTHER, HE MET HIS SON.
TAKE THIS GOAT HOME. I HAVE SOME WORK IN THE TOWN.
ALL RIGHT, FATHER.
I PAID TWO GOLD COINS FOR THAT GOAT. SEE THAT YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.
I WILL, FATHER.
ON HIS WAY HOME, THE YOUTH MET THE FARMER AND HIS FRIEND.
THIS IS A FINE GOAT. WILL YOU SELL IT TO ME?
HOW MUCH WILL YOU OFFER?
THREE GOLD COINS.
THE GOAT IS YOURS.


FATHER WILL BE PLEASED WITH THIS DEAL... IT'S BROUGHT HIM A PROFIT.
WHEN THE FARMER REACHED HOME—
WHAT A PLUMP GOAT!
YES. I INTEND TO GIVE A FEAST TO OUR FRIENDS. TIE IT UP IN THE BACKYARD.
AS THE FARMER ENTERED THE HOUSE—
MY POT! MY POT IS GONE!
WHERE IS THE POT WHICH I HAD KEPT HERE?
I GAVE IT TO THE BUTCHER TO FETCH WATER IN; HE HASN'T YET COME BACK.

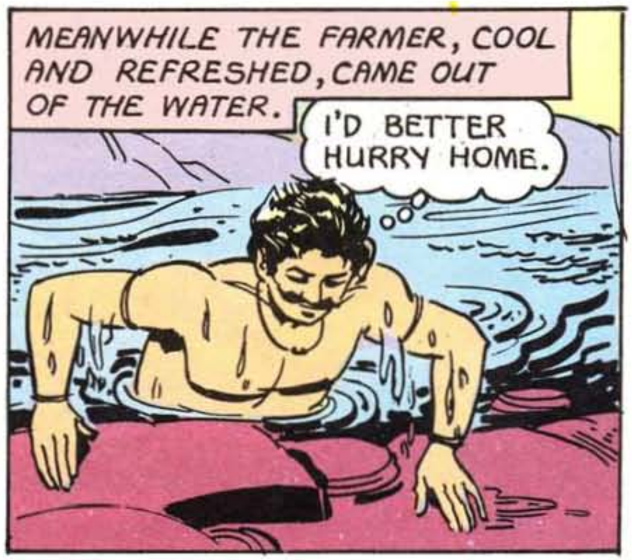

HE'S NOT LIKELY TO, EVER AGAIN. I HAD KEPT THE BAG OF GOLD COINS IN THAT POT.
OH, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
ALL MY HARD-EARNED MONEY GONE!
DON'T GRIEVE. NOBODY CAN DEPRIVE US OF WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS.
PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT. I THINK I'LL SACRIFICE THE GOAT AND INVOKE GOD'S BLESSINGS.

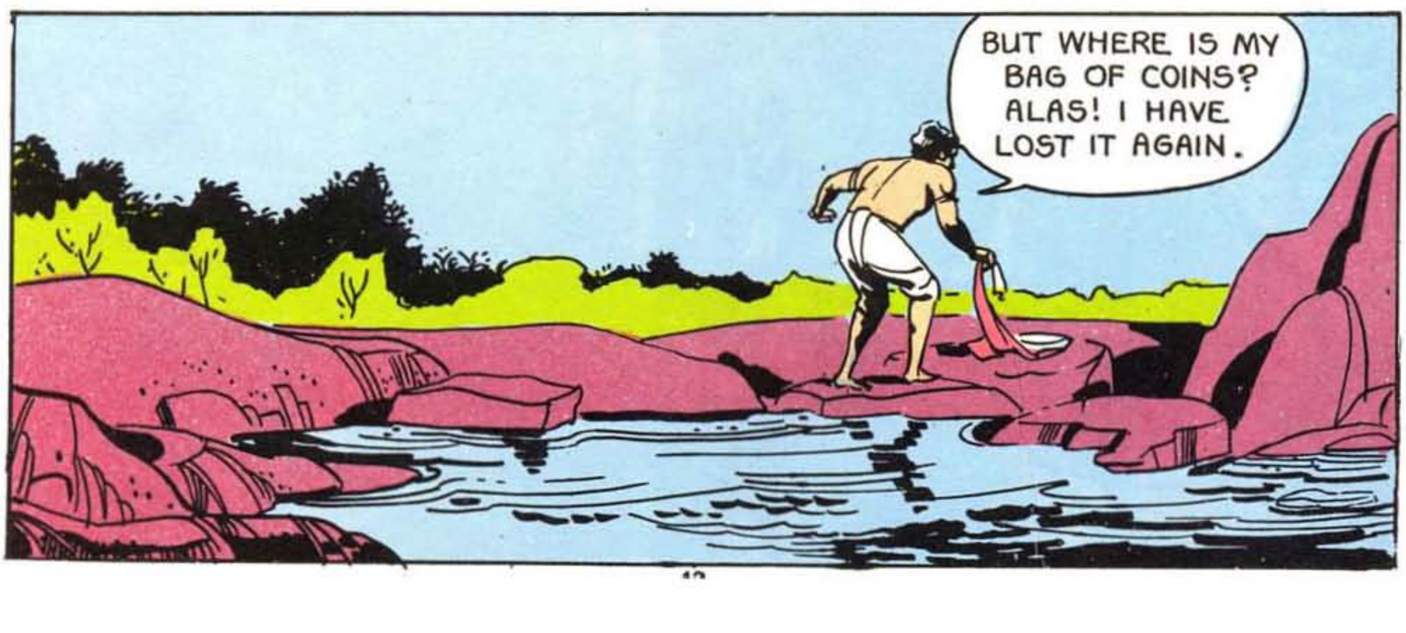

WITHIN MINUTES, HE CAME RUSHING INTO THE KITCHEN.
MY BAG OF COINS! MY TREASURE! I FOUND IT IN THE GOAT'S BELLY.
YOU LOOK EXCITED. WHAT IS THE MATTER?
HOW DID IT GET IN THERE?
THE BUTCHER MUST HAVE STUFFED IT DOWN THE ANIMAL'S THROAT. I BOUGHT IT FROM HIS SON.
I'VE LEARNT MY LESSON. HENCEFORTH I'LL CARRY THE MONEY ON MY PERSON.


THE NEXT DAY, THE FARMER HAD TO GO TO TOWN ON BUSINESS. ON THE WAY BACK—
IT IS HOT. A DIP IN THE WATER WOULD BE PLEASANT.
LEAVING THE CLOTHES AND THE BAG OF COINS ON THE BANK, HE GOT INTO THE WATER.
A SHEPHERD WHO HAPPENED TO PASS THAT WAY SAW THE BAG.
GOLD COINS! THIS IS MY LUCKY DAY.
HE WALKED AWAY WITH THE BAG.


ON THE WAY—
STRANGERS! THEY ARE SURE TO SNATCH MY BAG OF COINS.


HE THREW THE BAG INTO THE WELL.
I'LL COME BACK FOR IT, LATER.


MEANWHILE THE FARMER, COOL AND REFRESHED, CAME OUT OF THE WATER.
I'D BETTER HURRY HOME.


BUT WHERE IS MY BAG OF COINS? ALAS! I HAVE LOST IT AGAIN.


WHILE THE DEJECTED FARMER WAS WALKING HOMEWARDS, THERE CAME A STRONG WIND.
MY TURBAN!
CHASING THE TURBAN, THE FARMER REACHED THE WELL.
HELP!
MY TREASURE! I'VE FOUND IT!
HE CLIMBED OUT OF THE WELL...
...AND WENT HOME.


THE NEXT DAY, THE FARMER AND THE SHEPHERD RAN INTO EACH OTHER AT THE VILLAGE MARKET.
YOU LOOK UNHAPPY. WHAT'S THE MATTER?
I HAD HIDDEN A BAG OF GOLD COINS IN A WELL. NOW IT HAS DISAPPEARED.
THEN THE BAG I PICKED UP FROM THE WELL WAS NOT MINE.
YOUR MONEY IS SAFE. I FOUND THE BAG AND I THOUGHT IT WAS THE ONE I HAD LOST ON THE RIVER BANK. COME WITH ME AND I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU.
THE FARMER TOOK HIM HOME AND GAVE HIM THE BAG OF COINS.
I HOPE YOU SOON FIND YOUR BAG.


AS THE SHEPHERD WALKED HOMEWARDS—
WHAT A FOOL! HE COULDN'T RECOGNISE HIS OWN BAG.
WHEN THE SHEPHERD REACHED HOME—
THE COINS WILL BE SAFER IN THE HOLLOW OF MY STAFF.
THE NEXT DAY, AS HE WAS WALKING BY THE RIVER, HE TRIPPED AND THE STAFF FELL FROM HIS HAND. BEFORE HE COULD RETRIEVE IT, IT WAS CARRIED AWAY BY THE CURRENT...
...TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER WHERE THE FARMER HAPPENED TO BE BATHING.
A STAFF! I MAY FIND SOME USE FOR IT. I'LL TAKE IT HOME.


WHEN HE REACHED HOME—
THERE IS NO WOOD FOR FUEL.
WE CAN USE THIS STAFF I FOUND. I'LL CUT IT UP FOR YOU.
WHEN HE BROUGHT THE AXE DOWN ON THE STAFF—
MY GOLD COINS!
THRICE HAVE I LOST MY COINS AND THRICE HAVE I REGAINED THEM.
GLORY BE TO GOD!
MORAL: NOBODY CAN DEPRIVE US OF WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS.


THE UNGRATEFUL GOLDSMITH
ONCE UPON A TIME, A TRAVELLER WAS PASSING THROUGH A FOREST.
SUDDENLY—
HELP! HELP!
WHO IS THAT CALLING OUT FOR HELP?
HELP! HELP!
THE VOICE IS FROM THAT WELL. SOMEBODY MUST HAVE FALLEN IN.


O GOOD MAN, HELP US OUT OF THIS WELL.
THE KIND-HEARTED TRAVELLER LOWERED A CREEPER INTO THE WELL...
...AND PULLED THE ANIMALS UP.


DO VISIT ME WHEN YOU COME TO THE MOUNTAINS. I COULD BE OF SOME SERVICE TO YOU.
SO COULD I, IF YOU COME NEAR THE CITY BOUNDARY.
SO COULD I, IF YOU EVER VISIT THE JUNGLE.
THANK YOU, FRIENDS. I'LL CERTAINLY COME TO VISIT YOU.
JUST THEN—
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ME? I'M STILL DOWN HERE.
WAIT! DO NOT RESCUE THAT UNGRATEFUL MAN. HE'S NOT TO BE TRUSTED.


I CAN'T LEAVE HIM TO DIE OF STARVATION. I WILL HELP HIM OUT.
WE WISH YOU WOULD HEED OUR ADVICE.
SOON THE MAN TOO WAS OUT OF THE WELL.
I AM A GOLDSMITH. YOU MUST VISIT ME AT MY HOUSE IN THE CITY.
A YEAR LATER, THE TRAVELLER RETURNED TO THE SAME SPOT WITH A BAG OF GOLD COINS.
IT IS GETTING DARK. LET ME REST NOW. TOMORROW I SHALL SEEK MY FRIENDS.
AS HE SLEPT, A BAND OF ROBBERS HAPPENED TO PASS BY.


THEY TIED HIM UP...
...PUSHED HIM DOWN THE EDGE OF A PRECIPICE...
...AND RAN AWAY WITH HIS BAG OF GOLD COINS.
AT THAT MOMENT, THE MONKEY WHO HAPPENED TO BE NEAR BY, HEARD SOMEONE CRYING FOR HELP.
THAT VOICE SOUNDS FAMILIAR. LET ME SEE WHO IT IS.
HELP! HELP!
AH! IT'S YOU! DO NOT WORRY, MY FRIEND. I'LL SET YOU FREE IN NO TIME.
FORTUNATELY FOR THE TRAVELLER, HE HAD FALLEN ON A HEAP OF GRASS.


THE MONKEY RESCUED HIM.
AS HE RESTED UNDER A TREE, THE TRAVELLER TOLD HIS TALE.
YOU STAY HERE AND RELAX. I'LL BRING YOU YOUR BAG OF GOLD COINS.
IT DID NOT TAKE THE MONKEY LONG TO FIND THE ROBBERS.
GOOD! THEY ARE ALL ASLEEP.
HE TOOK THEIR POSSESSIONS AND HID THEM IN A BUSH NEAR BY.


WHEN THE ROBBERS WOKE UP—
HEY! OUR SWORDS! OUR BOXES! WHERE ARE THEY?
SOME EVIL SPIRIT HAS WHISKED THEM AWAY.
THE JUBILANT MONKEY CARRIED THE BAG OF COINS TO THE TRAVELLER.
HERE IS YOUR BAG OF COINS.
YOU HAVE BEEN KIND TO ME, MY FRIEND.
THE TRAVELLER TOOK THE BAG OF COINS AND WENT ON HIS WAY. BUT SOON—
GRRR...
OH, GOD! A LION!


DON'T BE AFRAID. I AM YOUR FRIEND. DON'T YOU REMEMBER ME?
WHY, YOU ARE THE LION OF THE WELL!
YOU ARE RIGHT. COME TO MY CAVE AND BE MY GUEST.
AT THE CAVE—
I HAVE A PRESENT FOR YOU. PLEASE ACCEPT IT.
YOU ARE VERY GENEROUS, O KING OF BEASTS.
AS THE TRAVELLER SET OUT FOR THE CITY—
HOW GRATEFUL THE ANIMALS HAVE BEEN! NOW LET ME VISIT THE GOLDSMITH.


WHEN HE REACHED THE CITY THE NEXT MORNING —
OUR PRINCESS IS KILLED!
DO YOU KNOW WHO DID IT?
IT IS HARD TO FIND SOMEONE IN THIS EXCITED CROWD WHO WILL GUIDE ME TO THE GOLDSMITH.
FORTUNATELY THE GOLDSMITH ALSO HAPPENED TO BE IN THAT CROWD.
MY FRIEND, IT IS A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU AGAIN. PLEASE COME HOME WITH ME.
I AM GLAD THAT YOU REMEMBER ME.
THE GOLDSMITH TOOK HIM HOME.
NOW WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I HAVE A NECKLACE, A PRESENT FROM OUR FRIEND, THE LION. HELP ME SELL IT AT A GOOD PRICE.


WHILE TAKING OUT THE NECKLACE FROM THE BAG, THE TRAVELLER SPILLED A FEW COINS.
I WISH I COULD GET MY HAND ON THOSE GOLD COINS.
LET ME HELP YOU.
THE GOLDSMITH GATHERED THE COINS AND HANDED THEM BACK TO THE TRAVELLER.
HERE IS THE NECKLACE. AND I ALSO ENTRUST THIS BAG OF GOLD COINS TO YOU. RETURN IT TO ME WHEN I LEAVE.
YOU CAN TRUST ME WITH YOUR BAG OF GOLD COINS. AND I SHALL SELL YOUR NECKLACE FOR A HIGH PRICE.
THIS LOOKS LIKE THE NECKLACE OF THE PRINCESS. THE LION MUST HAVE KILLED HER AND GOT IT.
I WILL INFORM THE KING ABOUT THE NECKLACE. THE TRAVELLER WILL BE SUSPECTED AND HANGED. I WILL BE REWARDED AND THE COINS WILL BE MINE FOREVER.


WHEN THE KING WAS INFORMED, HE ORDERED THE ARREST OF THE TRAVELLER.
YOU TOOK THE LIFE OF THE PRINCESS. NOW YOU PAY FOR IT WITH YOUR LIFE.
YOUR MAJESTY, I AM INNOCENT.
THE NECKLACE FOUND IN YOUR POSSESSION PROVES YOUR GUILT. YOU WILL BE HANGED TOMORROW AT SUNRISE.
OH GOD!
THE TRAVELLER WAS KEPT IN PRISON FOR THE NIGHT.
THE ANIMALS WERE RIGHT. THE GOLDSMITH HAS BETRAYED MY TRUST.
TAKE HEART. NOT EVERYTHING IS LOST. I'M HERE.
IT'S YOU, MY FRIEND. BUT HOW WILL YOU SAVE ME?
I WILL GO AND BITE THE QUEEN MOTHER.


NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO CURE HER OF MY POISON. THEN YOU GO TO THE PALACE...
...AND SAVE HER WITH THIS HERB. THE KING IS BOUND TO REWARD YOU.
GIVING HIM THE HERB, THE SNAKE WENT AWAY.
AFTER A WHILE, AT THE PALACE—
I'VE BEEN BITTEN BY A SNAKE! SAVE ME!
THE LEARNED MEN OF MEDICINE ALL CAME THERE.
WE HAVE TRIED ALL THE REMEDIES KNOWN TO US BUT IN VAIN, YOUR MAJESTY.


IS THERE NO ONE WHO CAN SAVE MY MOTHER?
YES, THERE IS ONE — THE INNOCENT MAN WHOM YOU HAVE CHARGED WITH THE MURDER OF YOUR DAUGHTER.
THAT WAS DEFINITELY A SUPERNATURAL VOICE. BRING THE PRISONER TO ME.
WHEN THE PRISONER WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING —
SAVE MY MOTHER AND I WILL REWARD YOU.
YOUR MAJESTY, I WILL DO SO. BUT FIRST PLEASE LISTEN TO MY STORY.


AS THE TRAVELLER CONCLUDED HIS STORY—
THE PRINCESS MIGHT HAVE BEEN KILLED BY THE LION. THE GREEDY GOLDSMITH LIED ABOUT ME.
HE SHALL BE PUNISHED. NOW PLEASE CURE HER.
THE TRAVELLER MIXED THE HERB IN A GLASS OF MILK...
...AND MADE THE QUEEN MOTHER DRINK IT.
MOTHER! DO YOU FEEL BETTER?
I DO, MY SON. SEE THAT THE ONE WHO SAVED MY LIFE IS AMPLY REWARDED.


THE KING TURNED TO THE TRAVELLER.
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS BAG OF GOLD COINS.
THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY.
BY THEN IT WAS DAYBREAK. THE GOLDSMITH WAS WAITING AT THE PLACE OF EXECUTION.
THE TRAVELLER HAS NOT YET BEEN BROUGHT. ONCE HE IS HANGED, I'M SAFE.
JUST THEN THE KING'S SOLDIERS CAME THERE AND SEIZED HIM.
YOU ARE THE GUILTY ONE! YOU ARE TO BE HANGED! THE KING'S ORDERS.
MORAL: EVIL IS ALWAYS REWARDED WITH EVIL.


THE MAGIC LAMP
YOUR ORDER, MY MASTER?
BRING ME THE LATEST AMAR CHITRA KATHA.
HERE YOU ARE, MASTER.
OH! THANK YOU!
OH! I FORGOT. YOU MAY GO.
MAY I BORROW YOUR COPY OF A AMAR... CHIT.. CHIT... CHITRA KATHA FOR A WHILE?
!
WHO DOES NOT LOVE TO READ AMAR CHITRA KATHA?
SHER SHAH